

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this paper, claim 1 has been amended to more clearly indicate that it is the partly isomerized Fischer-Tropsch derived feedstock that is fractionated into a light base oil precursor fraction and a heavy base oil precursor fraction. Additionally, claim 20 has been amended to correct a spelling error. In view of these amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

As pointed out in the previous response, the present invention is directed to a process for preparing a heavy base oil having a kinematic viscosity at 100 °C of above 15 cSt and a light lubricating base oil having a kinematic viscosity at 100 °C of between 3.8 and 6 cSt from a partly isomerized Fischer-Tropsch derived feedstock. In the process, the partly isomerized Fischer-Tropsch derived feedstock is separated via distillation into a light base oil precursor fraction and a heavy base oil precursor fraction. Each fraction is then separately dewaxed and the desired base oil products are isolated from the dewaxed oil fraction.

In the Office Action, claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berlowitz (US Patent 6,475,960). In the Berlowitz process, a Fischer Tropsch hydrocarbon feedstock is hydroisomerized, dewaxed and then fractionated to form two or more fractions of different viscosity as base stocks.

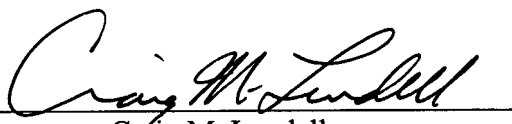
The present invention differs from the Berlowitz process in that the feedstock is separated into a light base oil precursor fraction and a heavy base oil precursor fraction prior to the dewaxing step. Applicants respectfully submit that there is no teaching or suggestion in the Berlowitz reference of fractionating the partly isomerized Fischer-Tropsch derived feedstock into a first base oil precursor fraction and a second base oil precursor fraction followed by separate dewaxing steps. Column 9, lines 37 to 50 of Berlowitz simply teaches that the waxy feed obtained in the Fischer-Tropsch process that can be utilized in the process of Berlowitz can have a boiling point of up to about 1245 °C. There is no teaching in this section of creating two base oil precursor fractions and then separately dewaxing those fractions. Example 4 of Berlowitz which includes Table 6, discusses fractionating the Fischer-Tropsch reactor waxy feed into several fractions including a 700 °F+ fraction and a 1050 °F+ fraction. However, this example does not teach separately dewaxing the fractions to obtain different base oil products. Rather, this example states that the 700 °F+

fraction was used as the waxy feed of the invention for the hydroisomerization step. The 1050 °F+ fraction was not processed according to the process of Berlowitz. Further, the fractionation took place prior to the hydroisomerization. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Berlowitz simply teaches the hydroisomerization and dewaxing of a single base oil precursor fraction, regardless of the upper end boiling point.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and favorable consideration by the Examiner is requested. Should the Examiner find any impediment to the allowance of the claims that could be corrected by a telephone interview with the undersigned, the Examiner is requested to initiate such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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